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ABSTRACT

A comparison of leadership theory and administrative theory will help to show whether there is a conflict for educational administrators between being a leader and being an administrator. Two definitions of leadership stress the importance of initiating activities within a group. In education, leadership necessitates decision-making within an organizational structure (an institution). The democratic nature of educational organizations means that decision-making is best shared with teachers and staff. Studies of leadership style reinforce this emphasis on shared decision-making. Administrative theories are quite diverse, but they generally emphasize that administration by an individual or a group involves dealing with cyclical activities and with policies, resources, and the execution of decisions, all within a larger system. Hence the nature of administration is dependent on the nature of the services to be delivered and on their organizational context. By relating leadership to administration, then, one sees that they both imply working with groups, involve decision-making (preferably democratic, in an educational institution), and are dependent on the nature of the institution within which they take place. Thus, because leadership is so closely related to administration, educational administrators should be both leaders and administrators. (RW)

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Ted Bitner
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"Becoming a More Effective Educational Leader/Administrator"

Can a successful leader be a successful administrator? Can a successful administrator be a successful leader? Are leaders and administrators the same entity? Some researchers have reported that being a leader is very distinct from being an administrator. Yet, the public school superintendent and principal are called upon to be both. Can the conflict be resolved?

The purpose of this report is to relate leadership theory and administrative theory with their effect on today's educational administrator.

LEADERSHIP DEFINED

According to Boles (1975) "Leadership is a process in which an individual takes initiative to assist a group to move toward productive goals . . ."[1] Anderson and VanDyke (1972) defined leadership as ". . . the initiation of new structure or procedure for accomplishing an organization's goals and objectives . . ."[2]

Both definitions indicate that leadership has to do with a dynamic group rather than with a group in a static state.

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[1]Harold W. Boles, Introduction to Educational Leadership, p. 117

[2]L. W. Anderson and L. A. VanDyke, Secondary School Administration, p. 23.

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Some researchers report that administrative tasks do not show leadership, and that the administrative tasks are for maintenance purposes only while reflecting the group as maintaining the status quo. Lipham viewed leading as the antithesis of administering,[3] but Lonsdale stressed that there are two main facets of a leader's job, i.e., leading and administering.[4]

LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS

In relating leadership to educational institutions, one must understand the organizational structure of the institution. In the public school setting, for example, the local school board delegates authority to the superintendent of the system. The board establishes policy and the superintendent carries it out as an administrative function. At the same time, the superintendent is expected to suggest possible solutions to educational problems as he applies his expertise in the field in a leadership role of decision making.

Campbell saw the decision making process in leadership thusly: "The leader needs to be able to specify a consequential problem, analyze it, find alternatives, consider the possible consequences of each alternative, choose the "best" alternative, and implement it with action."[5]

Leadership can be a process of social interaction, then, where certain persons involved in the organization give certain things for something in return. In the educational setting described, faculty,

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[3]Boles, op. cit., p. 119. [4]Ibid., p. 122.

[5]Ibid., p. 122

building administrators, and certified office personnel could be functions of the leadership design for educational planning.

Educational institutions are seen to be democratic in nature. One of Dewey's main theses was that if children are to learn democracy, then they should be taught in a democratic manner and in a democratic environment. Are faculty members included in the decision making process at the building level? Are building principals included in the central office decision making process? In order to show democracy in action to students, the faculty and professional staff should be included in the decision making process.

DuVall and Euchon (1981) said "Principals who can attract resources for teachers and improve classroom conditions by participating on a management team where their influence is demonstrated, will have teachers with higher morale and more commitment to quality education than principals without such influence."[6] If teachers know their principals help make certain decisions, they view the principal as someone who can make a difference in their particular situation.

In fact, a recent survey of the literature indicated that in over one hundred studies on group processes that hardly a study failed to demonstrate that satisfaction and other beneficial consequences accrue from an increase in the employee's decision making power.[7]

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[6]DuVall, Lloyd and Euchon, Kenneth, "School Management Teams: What Are They and How Do They Work?" (NASSP Bulletin, '65, 445, p. 64) May, 1981.

[7]Ibid., p. 37.

Richman pointed out that "Effective leadership, especially in relatively democratic organizations, often depends on much more than formal authority and official power. . . .It also depends on providing an environment and structure that adequately satisfy important human needs . . ., of mutual respect, trust and confidence."[8]

Although we should be careful not to equate education with business and industry, certain of their models can be adapted for use in the field of education. For example, Sexton and Switzer used the Blake-Mouton Grid For Administrative Behavior, which is primarily used in business and industry, as a model to develop their own Grid For Educational Management.[9] This grid is concerned with effectiveness in leadership rather than efficiency of production.

The researchers found that in routine matters of the educational administrative process, McGregor's "theory X" served as the basis of leadership style while in matters of system wide interest, McGregor's "theory Y" served as the basis of leadership style.

LEADERSHIP STYLE

According to Hersey and Blanchard from Ohio University, leadership style is how others perceive a leader's behavior, and not at all what leaders believe their behavior to be.[10] Getting feedback from faculty

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[8]Barry Richman and Richard Farmer, Leadership, Goals, and Power in Higher Education, p. 22.

[9]Michael J. Sexton and Karen Seitzer, "Educational Leadership: No Longer a Potpurri," Educational Leadership, Oct. 1977, p. 19-24

[10]Hersey, Paul; Blanchard, Kenneth and Guest, R. H., Organizational Change Through Effective Leadership (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1977), p. 21.

or staff members is important in order for the leader to get reaction to the type of leadership being practiced.[11]

Anderson and VanDyke considered the 1947 study done by the Institute of Social Research at the University of Michigan. The study indicated that higher productivity by the organization was more likely to occur when leadership included (1) the use by the manager of the principle of supportive relationships, (2) his use of group decision making and group methods of supervision, and (3) his high performance goals for the organization.[12] Valentine (1981) found that two of the five most negative comments made by teachers about their principals included (1) a lack of discussion by the principal with the teacher about school related problems to get the teacher's opinion, and (2) the lack of the teacher's involvement in decision making.[13] The educational leader, then, ought to be involved in effective group behavior with subordinates.

Halpin found two significant factors to be present in the behavior of effective leaders--namely, initiating structure and consideration.[14]

"Initiating structure," means that the leader is defining the relationship between himself and the members of his organization. It also refers to his efforts to establish well-defined patterns of organization, channels of communication, and methods of procedure.

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[11]Donald Slezak, "Participatory Management - Shared Decision Making Putting it all Together," Thrust, Vol. 5, No. 1, Oct. '75, p. 22-25.

[12]Anderson, L.W.; VanDyke, L. A., Secondary School Administration, p. 30ff.

[13]Valentine, Jerry, "Do Your Teachers Really Understand You?" NASSP Bulletin (65; 445; p.37) May '81.

[14]Op. cit.

"Consideration" means that there is friendship, mutual trust, respect, and warmth between the leader and members of the staff. The educational leader defines the proper setting but leaves room for positive interaction among the members of the group. Halpin said: "We believe that leadership based on democratic principles will be most effective."[15] Halpin believed that the two entities of democratic principles and leadership were not mutually exclusive events.

There doesn't seem to be any one leadership style which everyone accepts as being the best. In fact, Fiedler said, "Except for the unusual case, it is simply not meaningful to speak of an effective leader or of an ineffective leader; we can only speak of a leader who tends to be effective in one situation and ineffective in another. We have known for sometime that the same type of leadership style . . . will not be suitable for all situations."[16]

Thus far (1) two definitions of leadership have been given, (2) the definitions have related to those in the educational setting, and (3) leadership style has been touched on to set the stage for the discussion of administrative theory and its relationship to accepted standards of leadership behavior.

ADMINISTRATIVE STYLE

There are several general administrative theories which can be related to education, but, as with leadership, none has been selected as being the accepted administrative theory in the field.

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Fred E. Fiedler, A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness, p. 261.

Griffiths suggested some reasons for this dilemma: (1) the field possesses too much factualism, (2) too much respect for "experts" and "laws" is apparent, (3) there is a fear of theorizing, (4) there is an inadequate professional language and (5) a lack of understanding what theory is exists. He went on to say that theory is not a dream, a philosophy, a personal affair or a taxonomy.[17]

In order for there to be an administrative theory, Griffiths believed that the following criteria must be met: (1) it must be a guide to action, (2) it must guide a collection of facts, (3) it must serve as a guide to new knowledge and (4) it must explain the nature of administration.[18]

In the same treatment, Griffiths defined theory as " . . . essentially a set of assumptions from which a set of empiracle laws (principles) may be derived."[19]

Some of the assumptions would be: (1) Administration is the process of directing and controlling life in a social organization; (2) it is a generalized type of behavior to be found in all organizations; (3) its function is to develop and regulate the decision-making process in the most effective way possible; (4) the administrator works with groups--not individuals.

Halpin believed that sources for administrative theory as it relates to education included: (1) comments from administrators,

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[17]Daniel E. Griffiths, Administrative Theory, p. 1.

[18]Ibid., p. 28.

[19]Ibid. p. 28.

(2) survey research of teachers, (3) deductive reasoning of teachers and (4) adaptations of models from other disciplines.[20] Therefore, Halpin saw the utilization of ideas from people who would be affected by the administrative behavior as being important to consider in the formulation of such behavior.

An eclectic approach to a general administrative theory for education can be derived from general theories promoted by Mort, Sears, Simon, and Litchfield.

Mort saw the culture as having a series of definable sanctions which have reasonable bases. The sanctions, when stated as principles, are dimensions of goodness in action. These principles can be a series of tests to decide whether or not a proposed act will be a wise action within the system.[21] Will the decision being contemplated be good for the system without violating sanctions of society?

Sears believed that " . . . the administrative function derives its nature from the nature of the services it directs."[22] In practice one would study the activities of educational administration and then develop a theory, not vice-versa.

Simon saw a steady shift from principles of administration to a study of the condition under which the principles are applicable. He said, "the theory must determine . . . how institutionalized decisions

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[20]Andrew W. Halpin (ED.), Administrative Theory in Education, James D. Thompson, "Modern Approaches to Theory in Administration," p. 24.

[21]Griffiths, op. cit., p. 50ff.

[22]Ibid., p. 50.

can be made to conform to values developed within a broader organizational structure."[23] Will the decision being contemplated fit within not only the localized setting but also the total system's behavior?

Litchfield listed four major propositions about the administrative process: (1) it is a cycle of action; (2) it functions in the area of policy, resources, and execution; (3) it is carried on in a larger action system; and (4) Administration is the performance of it by an individual or a group in the context of an enterprise functioning in its environment.[24] In other words, the process is not an end to itself nor is it for only one group functioning within a larger setting.

Theory has now been defined and some of the accepted general concepts of theory construction have been discussed. The two entities of leadership and administration will now be related.

LEADERSHIP AND ADMINISTRATION

The most obvious relationship is found in the area of group dynamics. In both definitions of leadership, the group was of central focus. Leadership deals with the group in action; the group prescribes the actions of its leader and also limits his power. Initiating structure and consideration were seen to be important aspects of the group dynamics plan for a leader.

In Griffiths' definition of theory, it was pointed out that administration directs and controls a group. An administrator works

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[23]Ibid., p. 58.

[24]Ibid., p. 60-62

with groups--not with individuals. Litchfield said that the administrative process was done in part by a group functioning as a part of a larger organization.

Therefore, both leadership theory and administrative theory carefully include the group as the basic unit to be dealt with, through which goals are met, and by which success is measured. Without the group, there would be no need for leadership and there would be nothing to administer.

Decision making was an important concept in leadership and administrative theory. Campbell defined a leader in terms of six steps of the decision making process while Griffiths, when describing an administrator, also listed six similar steps.[25] After listing the steps, Griffiths went on to say that " . . . an organization may be evaluated (by) the quality of the decisions which the organization makes plus the efficiency with which the organization puts the decisions into effect."[26] The quality would be a function of leadership while the implementation would be a function of administration.

Once the group has been established, and has a leader, the problems which arise must be handled in an organized and rational manner. Leadership theory puts much emphasis on group participation as does administrative theory since it takes a group to evaluate, accept a solution and then to implement it.

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[25]Ibid., p. 113.

[26]Ibid.

Finally, the nature of the institution itself is important to both leadership and administration. Since educational institutions are considered to be democratic in nature, the administrative and leadership behaviors need to exhibit democratic principles. As has been shown, both administrative theory and leadership theory place a great deal of emphasis on the group. Democratic principles are used in decision making and other aspects of group dynamics, and Sears pointed out that the services directed actually determine the administrative functions involved. Therefore, if an educational institution is being directed and it is basically democratic, then the administrative function whould be democratic also.

In conclusion, it has been suggested that leadership is related very positively with administration at least in the areas of (1) group dynamics, (2) decision-making, and (3) institutional nature.

To answer the questions posed at the outset then, it appears that a successful leader must also be a successful administrator and vice versa as they can be and, perhaps, ought to be the same entity.

With this relationship established, each field should strengthen the other. More stable and accepted methods for leading should be evolving as a result, and an accepted theory of administration may be formulated as further study continues regarding the relationship between these two areas.